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PURPLE/BLACK: Opinions from Various Capitals on the Significance
of the New Russian Approach to the West

A confidential source in the Swiss Foreign Office has furnished to the Legation several reports from various Swiss diplomatic missions abroad concerning reactions to the recent manifestations of a more conciliatory attitude by the USSR toward the West. These reports are forwarded below for whatever they may be worth in adding to the information which the Department will already have received from these various capitals:

Report from Madrid, April 7, 1953

"The new orientation of Soviet policy has been unanimously denounced by Spanish opinion as a maneuver destined to reduce the vigilance of the western countries. An observer recently made the following analysis of current developments:

'Moscow manifestly fears the very firm position which the United States has taken toward Communism. Stalin, while alive, was the prisoner of the dogmas of his own cult. Badly informed in the beginning on the real strength of the United States, he did not foresee that the opposition would strengthen so quickly and would present a real danger for the whole Communist ideology. One must conclude that his entourage did not entirely share his views on the efficacy of a systematically negative position which had, as its consequence, the stirring-up of the world against Russia, and induced some frightened countries, despite the effect on their feelings concerning sovereignty, to seek aid and protection from the United States. The new Russian rulers are now trying to change the course by showing themselves to be more human. They hope thereby to win to their side those whom the Communist ideology still frightens, but who are discontented because of their adverse economic situation. The Americans, on the other hand, continue their internal and external struggle against Communism in a manner which is not always free of psychological errors. The exaggerations of

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Senator McCarthy, for example, appear as a veritable inquisition in the eyes of liberal persons. The objective of the Soviet Government today is to direct to its adversary the opprobrium which its own methods have encountered up to now. But that is simply a gross misnomer, and, therefore, only the very naive will place confidence in the peaceful intentions of the USSR. The Russians cannot settle with the West without condemning to death their new civilization. They, therefore, prefer to wait while putting up a good front to their dirty game."

"In Spanish political circles the German problem is considered as being the probable touchstone of future events. Germany, it is said, is the central point of the great conflict which separates the Soviet empire and the Western world. The military occupation of Germany has represented the most important fact in Europe since 1945. It is, therefore, with respect to that country that it will be seen whether the Kremlin's peace offensive contains certain elements, if not of good faith, at least of coordination. Faced with a positive Russian offer, Washington would find it difficult to persist in its present attitude."

Report from Rome, dated April 8, 1953

"A Senator very close to the Prime Minister has expressed the following:

"The Kremlin is unquestionably in the process of taking a series of important decisions. It is probable that, for purposes of consolidation, the prestige of the new rulers required a sacrifice of the memory of Stalin. This would explain why Soviet propaganda has put an end to the deification of the late dictator ... It is also not to be excluded that Russia, adopting procedures heretofore foreign to Communist tactics, wishes to decrease the vigilance of the free world, interrupt its defensive efforts, and leave more room for her brand of political and economic cooperation. According to the principles of Lenin, advance and retreat constitute a rule in the conduct of revolutionary tactics."

Report from Ankara, dated April 11, 1953

"The reactions of Turkish governmental circles are of two sorts. While they find good reason to rejoice, they also show a certain distrust and even fear in face of the unexpected reversal in the foreign policy of the USSR.

"The principal reason which leading Turkish governmental

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personalities find for satisfaction in the Soviet peace offensive is the hope of seeing a reduction in international tension.

"Among the many specifically Turkish positive reactions, the satisfaction which has been openly shown for several days by Minister of Foreign Affairs Fund Koprili is to be noted. He reports that he was always favorable toward a policy of force with respect to Moscow. In fact, Mr. Koprili, faithful to the hereditary fear of the Turks for their big neighbor to the north, has, during recent years, constantly insisted upon the fact that the USSR would not abandon its provocations until the day it was faced with strong united and decided powers.

"The negative reactions of the Turkish Government are connected with two sources of worry:

"First, Turkey fears that the Soviet peace offensive is only a new tactic destined to weaken the Western unity which the cold war has succeeded in creating. It is believed in Ankara that the successors of Stalin require a certain tranquillity until they are better established in power internally. This period may last two or three years, according to what is heard here. At that time new surprises will be possible. Whatever lies behind the new Russian attitude, the Kremlin is distrusted more than ever here.

"Second, Ankara fears that the period of 'cold peace', which now seems to be beginning, will engender a certain relaxation in the West and particularly in the United States. It is well-known that Turkey came to the international tension of the last few years the consideration which she has enjoyed among Western nations. The affiliation of Turkey into the Atlantic Pact and the very substantial American aid for her army have resulted principally from the Russian menace in South-eastern Europe. As military support was inconceivable without a parallel development economically, Turkey also received in the latter domain very considerable assistance from the United States. An era of tranquillity, no matter how fictitious it might be, would bring about a strong possibility of a decrease in American aid at a moment when the economic and financial situation of Turkey, now in a bad state, needs it more than ever."

Report from Bucharest, April 7, 1953

"The Romanians, who are not in a position to listen to foreign radio broadcasts, have been able to gather from their newspapers that in Korea a new effort has begun to achieve an armistice at the front. If these efforts meet with success, it will not be difficult for Party propaganda to ascribe a peaceful settlement to the efforts of the Kremlin; for they are concerned with distributing praise and calumny

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according to their discretion. Their tactic lies, as far as Korea is concerned, in establishing the myth that the Soviet Union is working to bring peace to the entire world, since that is what the people of the world are yearning for in contrast to /the alleged attitude of most of the Western governments.

"As far as the other machinations of Moscow diplomacy, little or nothing is known here. The Party papers have been just as nasty in recent days as before when speaking about the Americans, somewhat less so in regard to the British."

Robert M. Winfree
Second Secretary of Legation

cc: Ambassador, Moscow

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